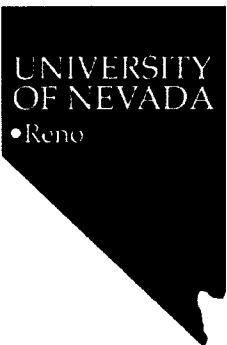


# WEEDBUSTERS

A NEVADA  
NOXIOUS WEED  
ACTIVITY BOOK





# COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

*Bringing the University to You*

Special Publication SP-00-16

# Weedbusters

## A Nevada Noxious Weed Activity Book

Written by Susan Donaldson  
Illustrated by Danielle Courtois

Fall, 2000



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# What's Wrong with Noxious Weeds?

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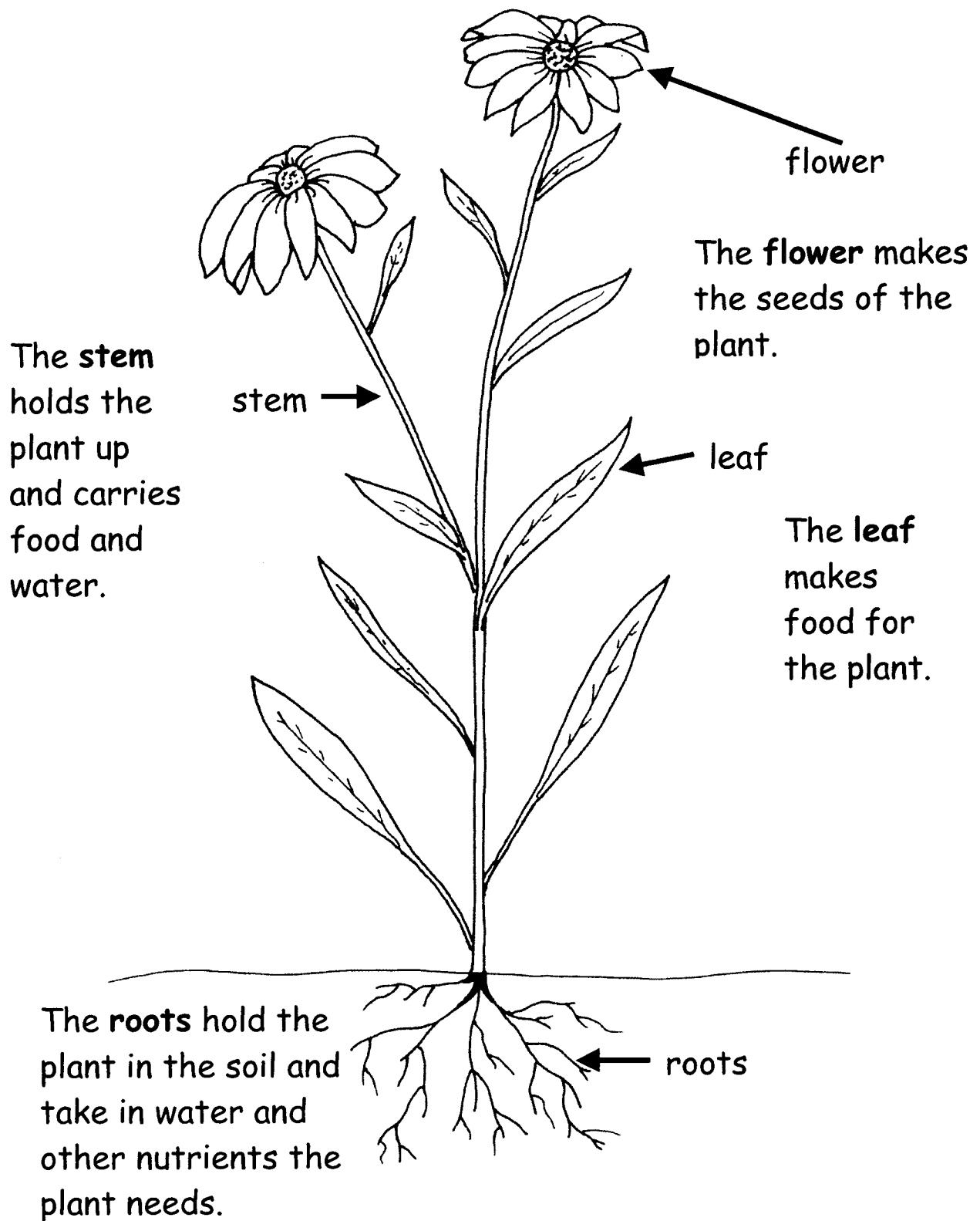
Everyone likes plants and flowers. They make pretty bouquets and dress up our yards and homes. Did you know we can not live without them? Plants make the oxygen we breathe and the food we eat. But some plants cause problems.

A plant is a weed when it grows where it is not wanted. People have brought plants to Nevada from other parts of the world. Sometimes people brought them here on purpose because they were pretty. Other plants came by chance. Some of these arrived without any natural enemies, like insects, to help keep them under control. In some cases these plants spread very quickly and cause big problems. We call these plants "noxious weeds," and they are named in Nevada law.

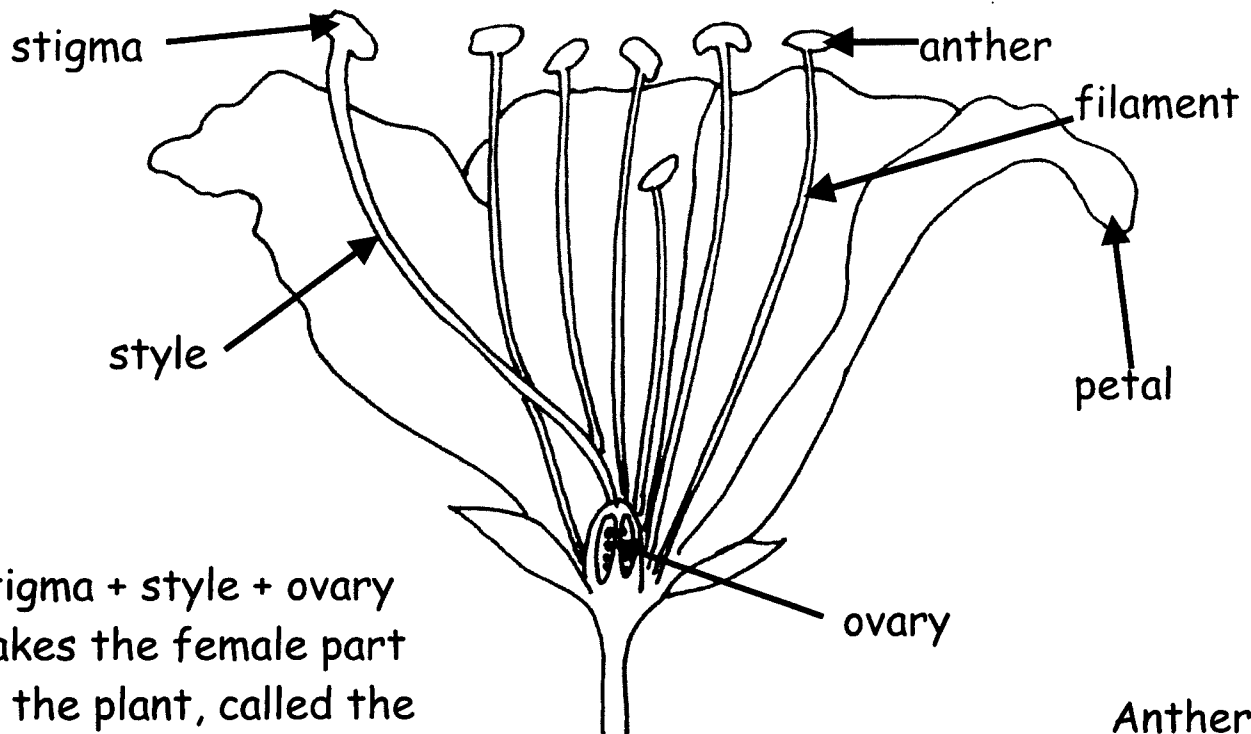
Noxious weeds hurt everyone in Nevada. Weeds make it hard for farmers to grow food. It costs money to try to kill the weeds. Some noxious weeds can make you or your animals sick, and others have nasty thorns or stickers. Noxious weeds also crowd out many of our good native plants, which hurts the animals that need them for food or shelter. Lakes, streams, and water quality can also be hurt by noxious weeds. In some places, noxious weeds grow so thickly that people can no longer go fishing or boating.

You can help stop noxious weeds! Use this activity book to learn to spot and report the plants that cause problems. Be careful not to spread them around. Never plant noxious weeds. Instead, help your parents choose pretty native plants for your yard. Check your clothing and car for noxious weed "hitchhiker seeds" and get rid of them before you travel. Make sure to check your shoes! With these simple steps, you can help protect Nevada from the harmful effects of noxious weeds.

# Parts of a Plant

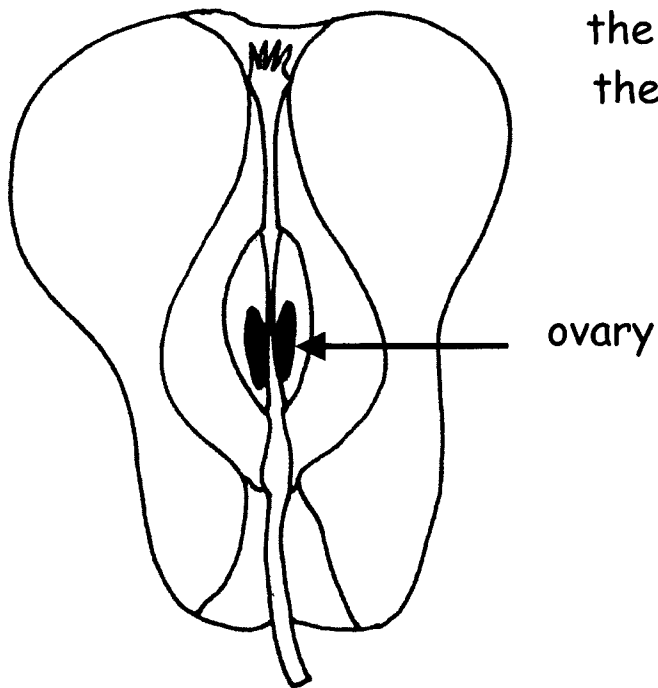


## Parts of a simple flower



Stigma + style + ovary  
makes the female part  
of the plant, called the  
pistil.

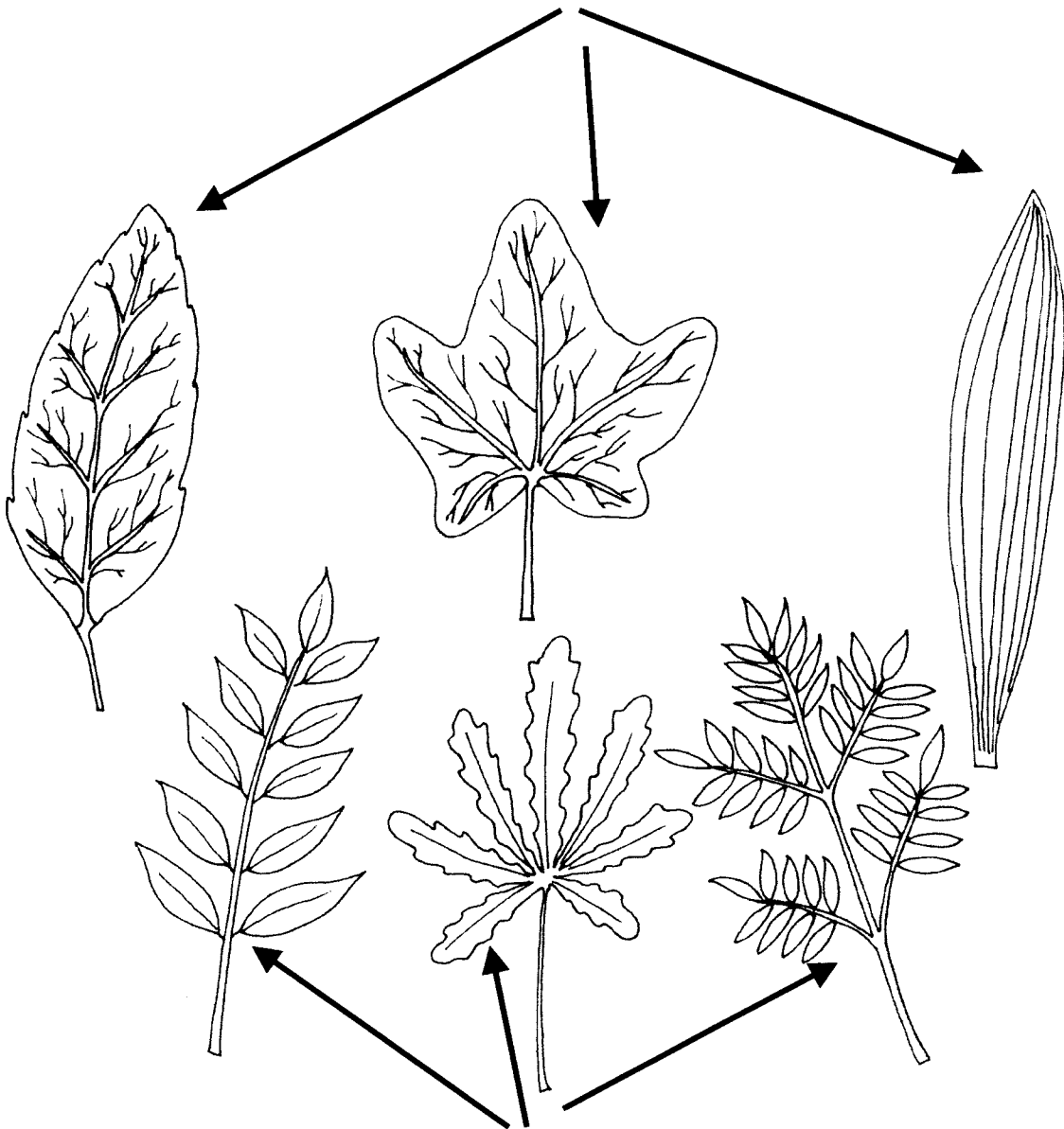
Anther +  
filament makes  
the male part of  
the plant, called  
the stamen.



Did you know? A flower can become a tasty fruit or a  
nasty weed seed, depending on the type of plant!

**Leaves come in many shapes. The shape of the leaf can help you decide what type of plant it is.**

These leaves are called simple leaves because they have one main part.

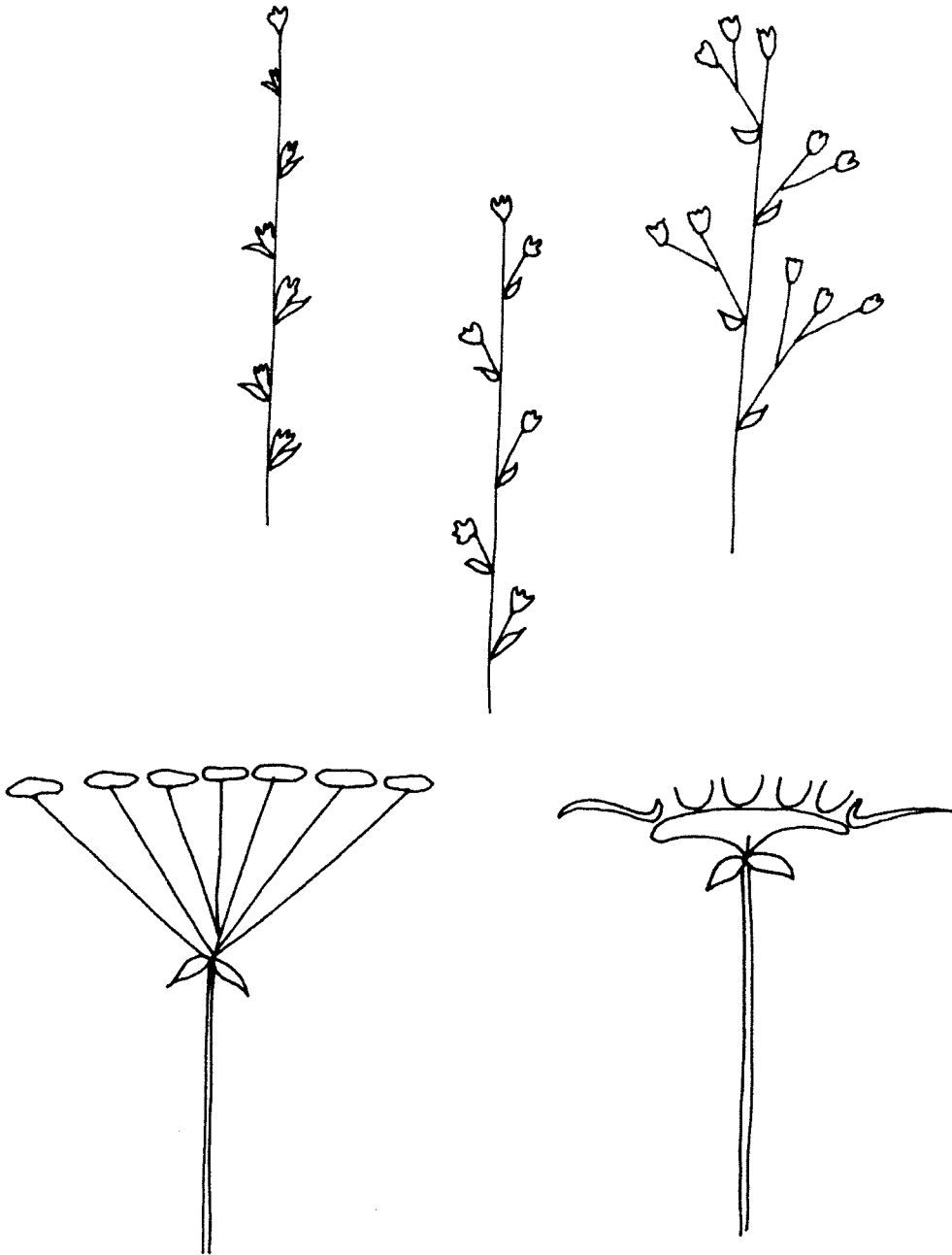


These leaves are compound leaves. They have many small parts.

Draw a simple leaf.

Draw a compound leaf.

Which kind of leaf looks like your hand?



Clusters of flowers may have many different shapes and colors. The type of clusters can help you decide which plant it is. Some form a shape like an umbrella. Others look like spikes. Which flower looks like an umbrella?



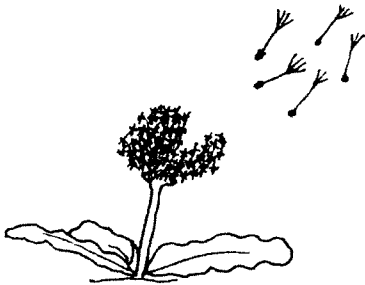
# How Do Weed Seeds Spread?



Hitchhikers hang onto socks, sneakers, tires, or animal's coats. The seeds have stickers or barbs on them. This is how puncturevine seeds spread.



Spinners such as maple seeds whirl in the wind. Some of these seeds have traveled as far as 32 miles on a windy day.



Drifters float on the wind, such as the downy seeds from dandelions and musk thistle.



Nuts are picked up and stockpiled by animals.



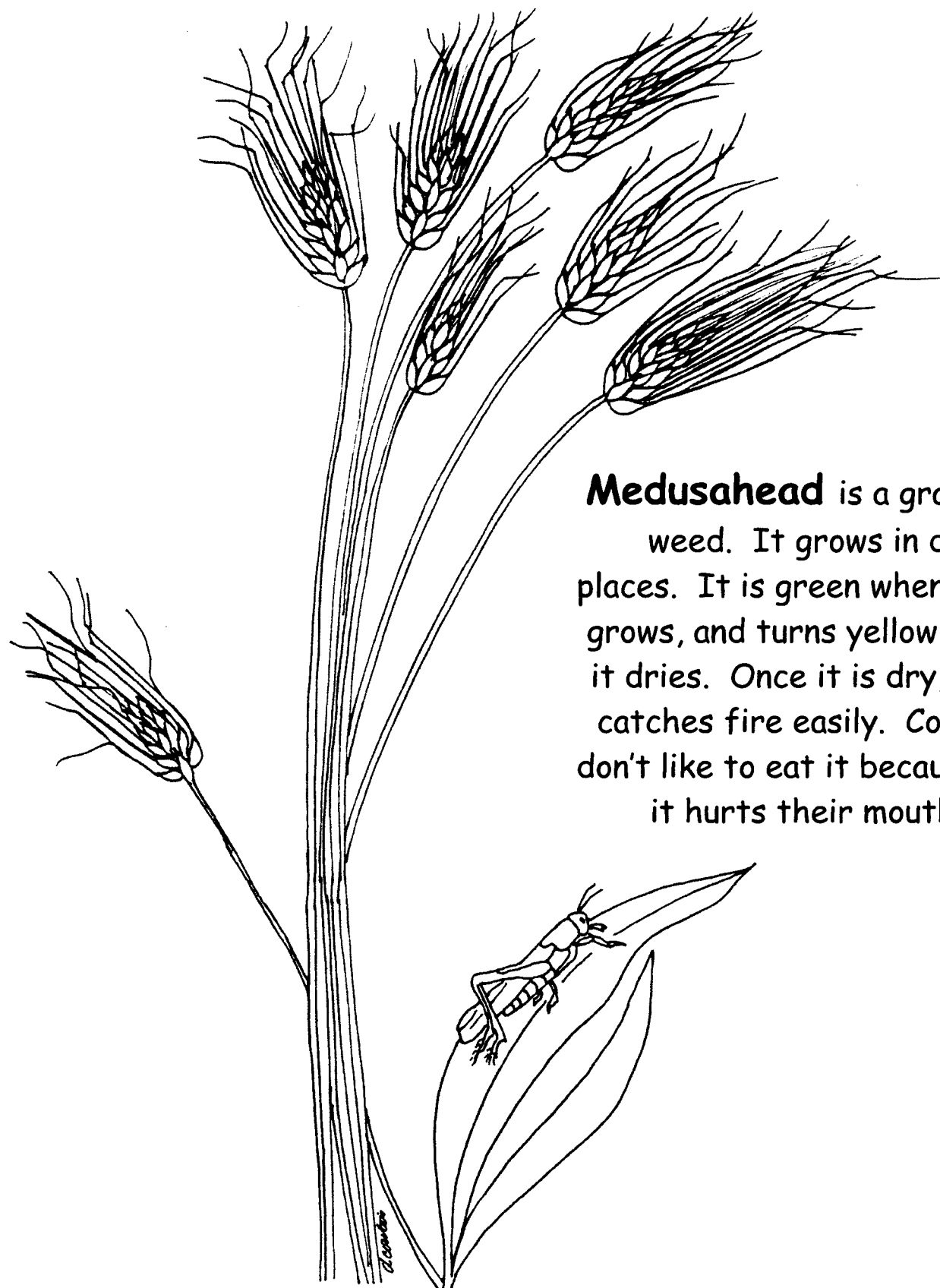
Hide-n-seekers are hidden inside fruits and other foods or in construction fill dirt. Tall whitetop and many other weeds spread this way.



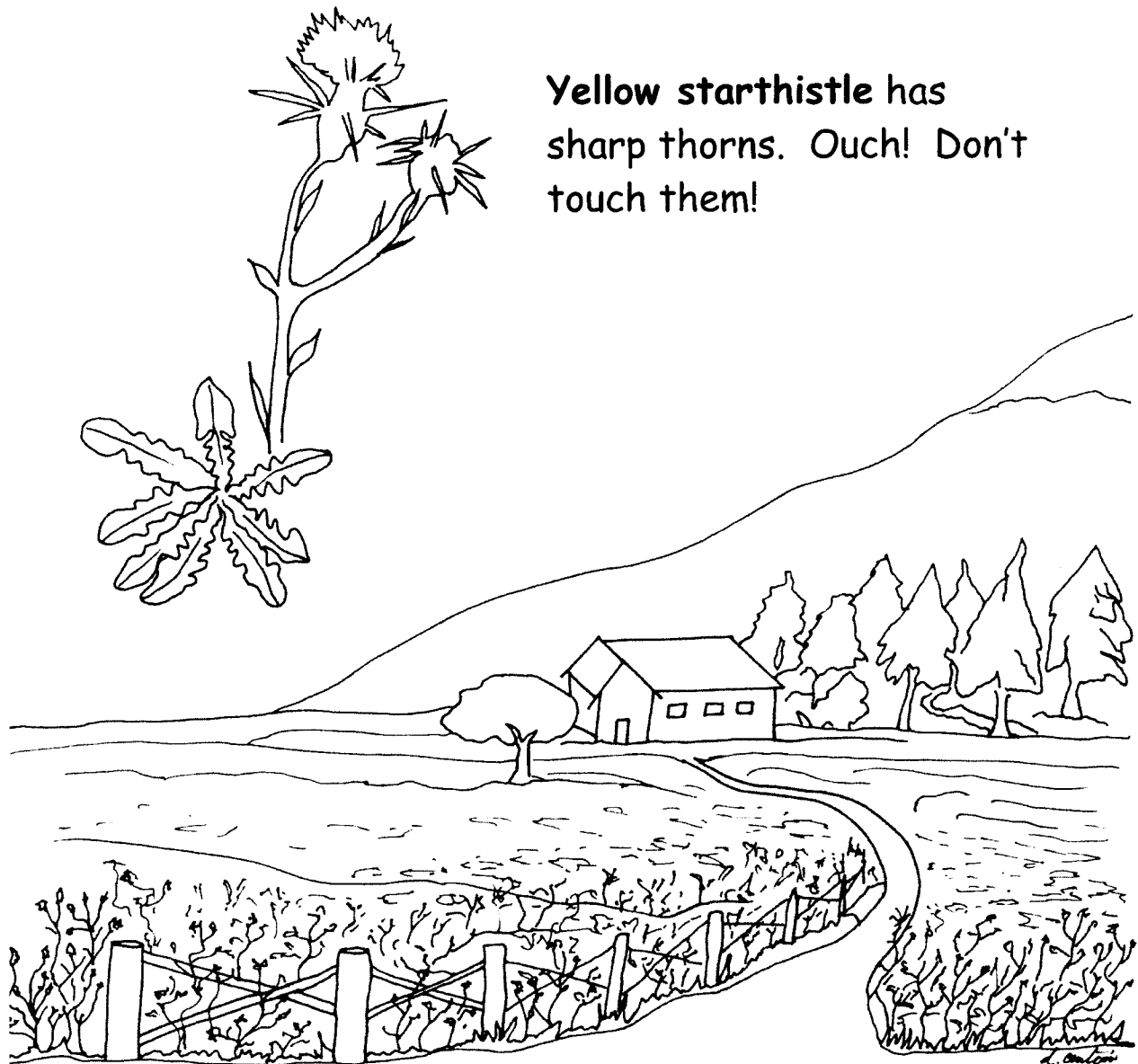
Water travelers such as purple loosestrife and tamarisk seeds drift downstream with flowing water. Seeds or parts of roots float away from their parent plants.

Now you're ready to learn about some of Nevada's problem weeds! Color the pictures while you read about them. There are pictures for all the noxious weeds named below.

Medusahead  
Yellow starthistle  
Musk thistle  
Knapweeds  
Puncturevine  
Purple loosestrife  
Eurasian watermilfoil  
Western waterhemlock  
Poison hemlock  
Dyer's woad  
Rush skeletonweed  
Hoary cress  
Leafy spurge  
Dalmatian toadflax  
Tall whitetop



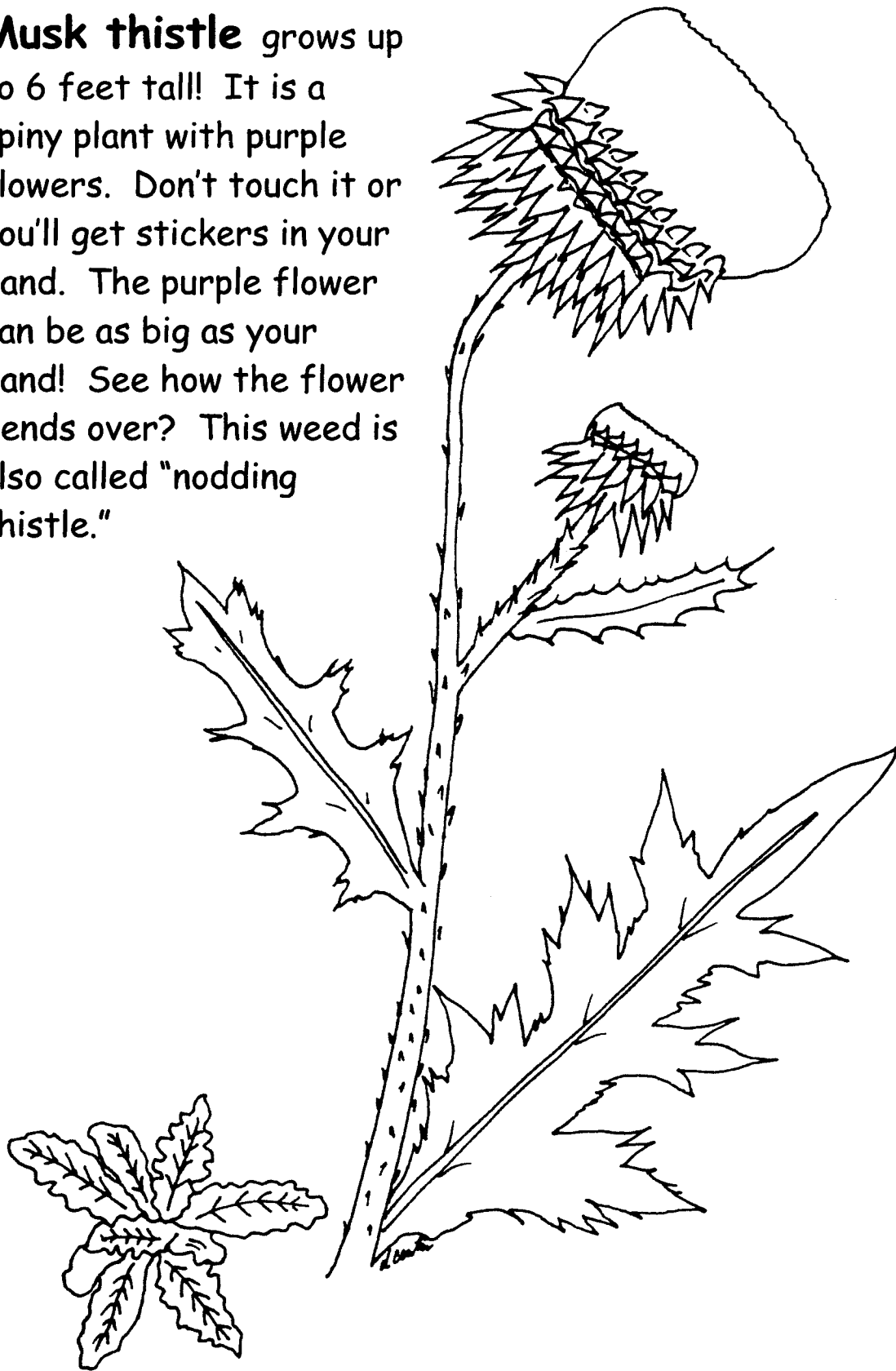
**Medusahead** is a grass weed. It grows in dry places. It is green when it grows, and turns yellow as it dries. Once it is dry, it catches fire easily. Cows don't like to eat it because it hurts their mouths.



**Yellow starthistle** has sharp thorns. Ouch! Don't touch them!

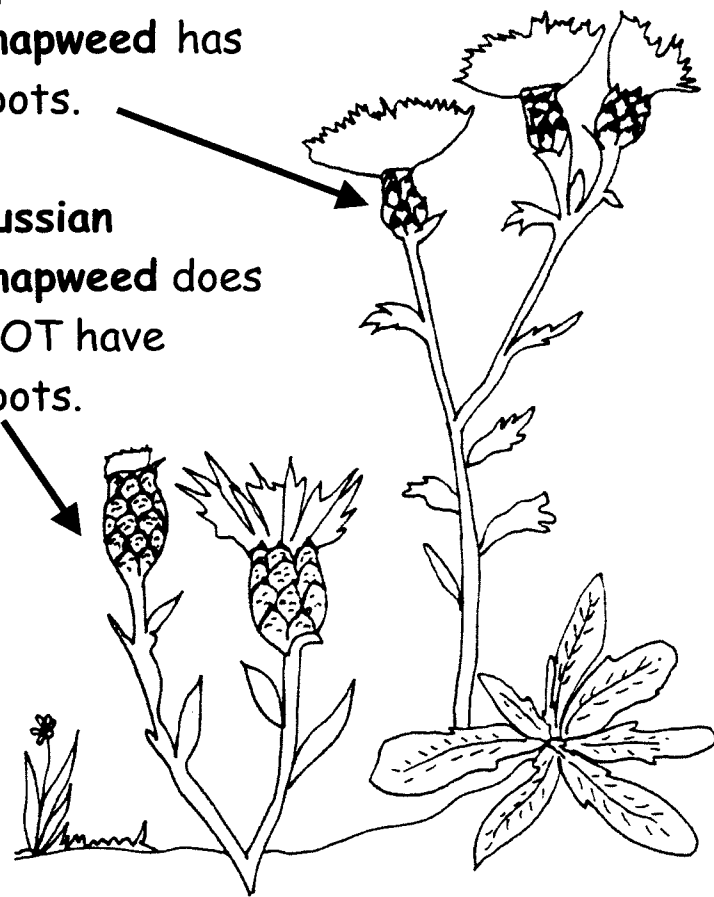
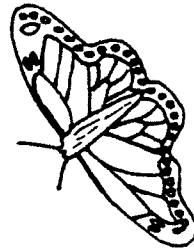
**Yellow starthistle** comes from southern Europe. It probably got here in soil carried on ships. This nasty weed can easily take over your yard. Yellow starthistle crowds out our native plants that animals depend on for food. It has sharp spines that can hurt people and animals. Like its name, the flowers are yellow.

**Musk thistle** grows up to 6 feet tall! It is a spiny plant with purple flowers. Don't touch it or you'll get stickers in your hand. The purple flower can be as big as your hand! See how the flower bends over? This weed is also called "nodding thistle."



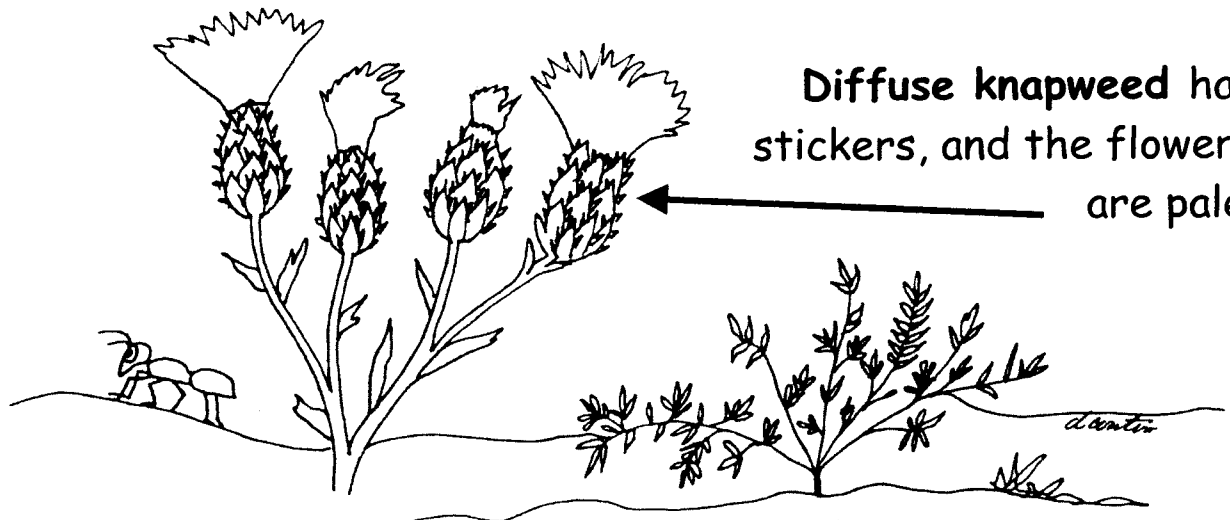
**Spotted  
knapweed** has  
spots.

**Russian  
knapweed** does  
NOT have  
spots.

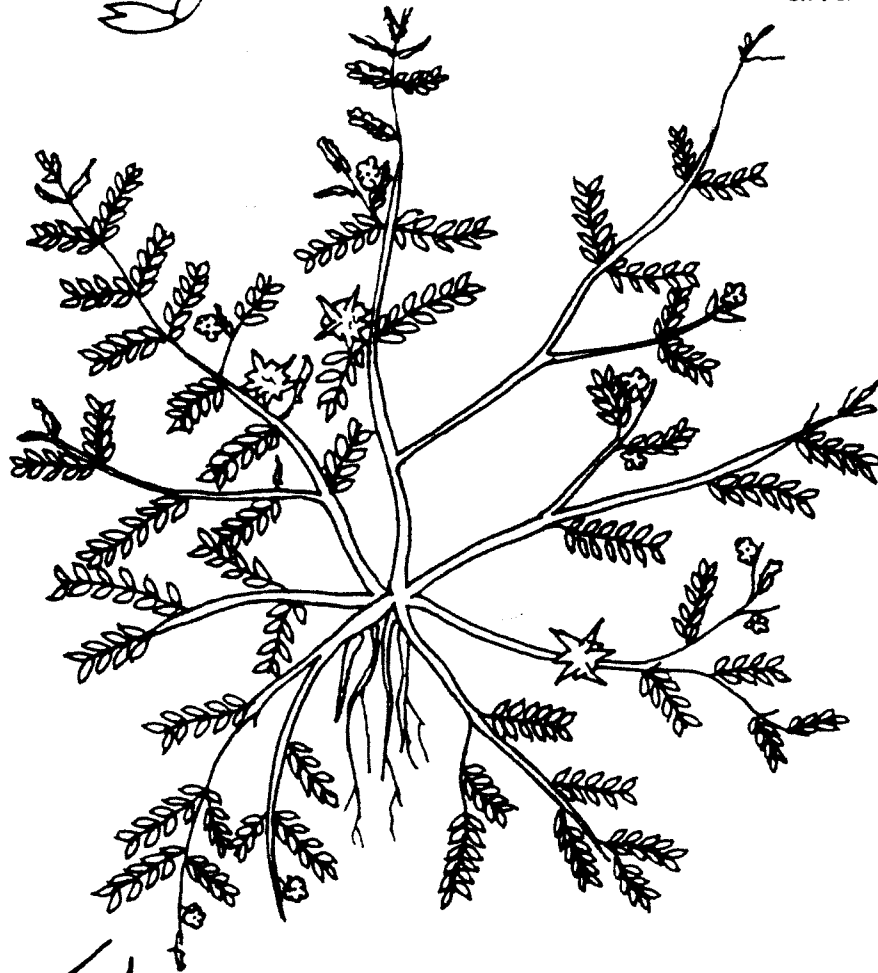
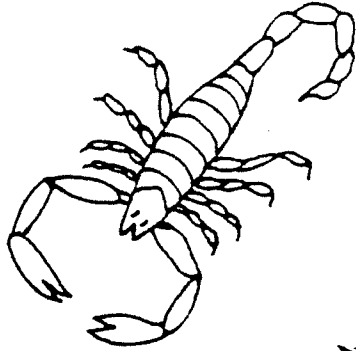


**Knapweeds**  
have pink, purple,  
or white flowers.  
They grow in dry  
places and take  
over fast.  
Animals don't  
like their taste.

**Diffuse knapweed** has  
stickers, and the flowers  
are pale.

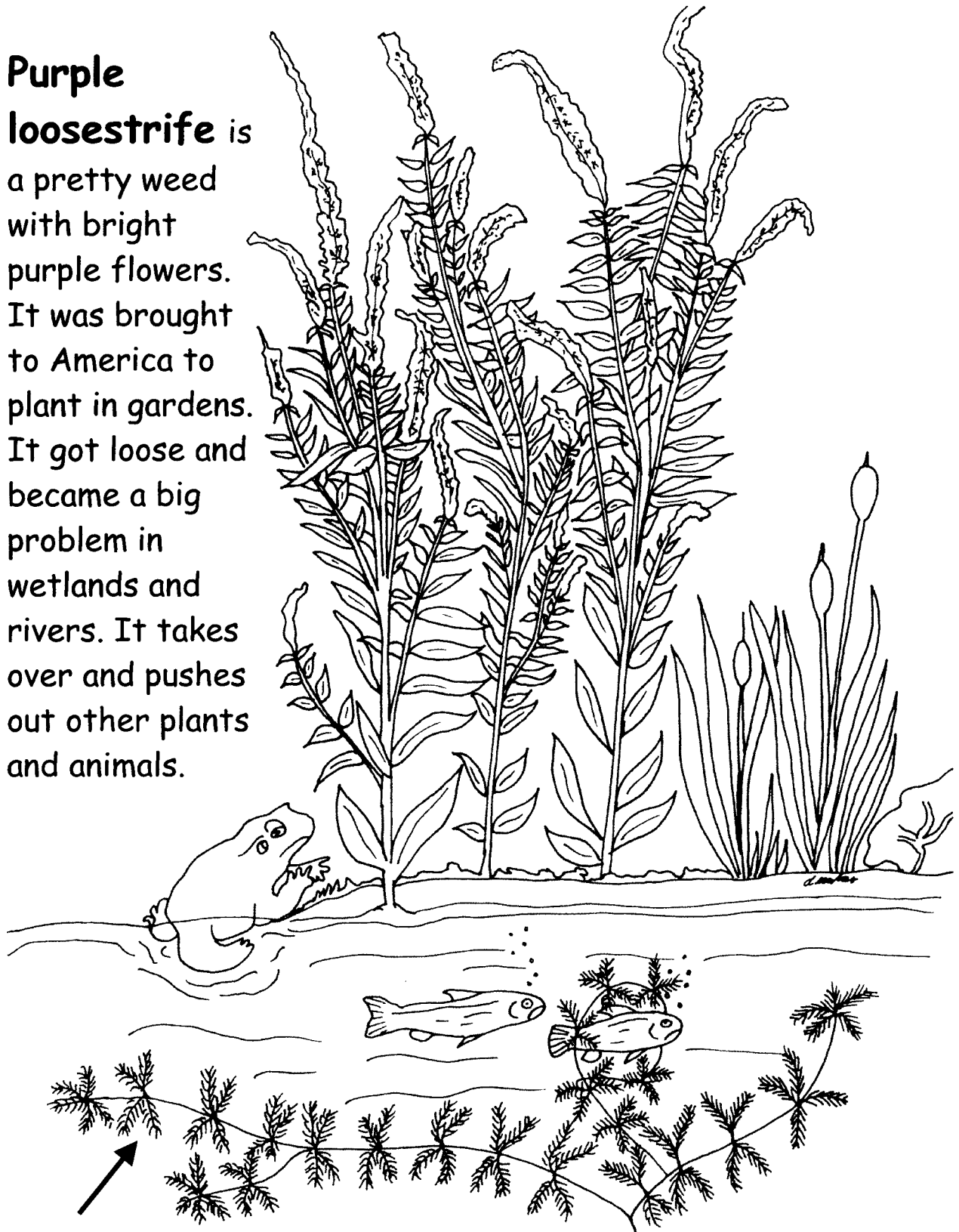


**Puncturevine** is another nasty weed. It grows close to the ground and hides its tiny yellow flowers. But if you step on a seed, you will know it! The seeds can push through bike tires and shoes and hurt you.



Some people think the seed parts look like goatheads. They are big and sharp.

**Purple loosestrife** is a pretty weed with bright purple flowers. It was brought to America to plant in gardens. It got loose and became a big problem in wetlands and rivers. It takes over and pushes out other plants and animals.

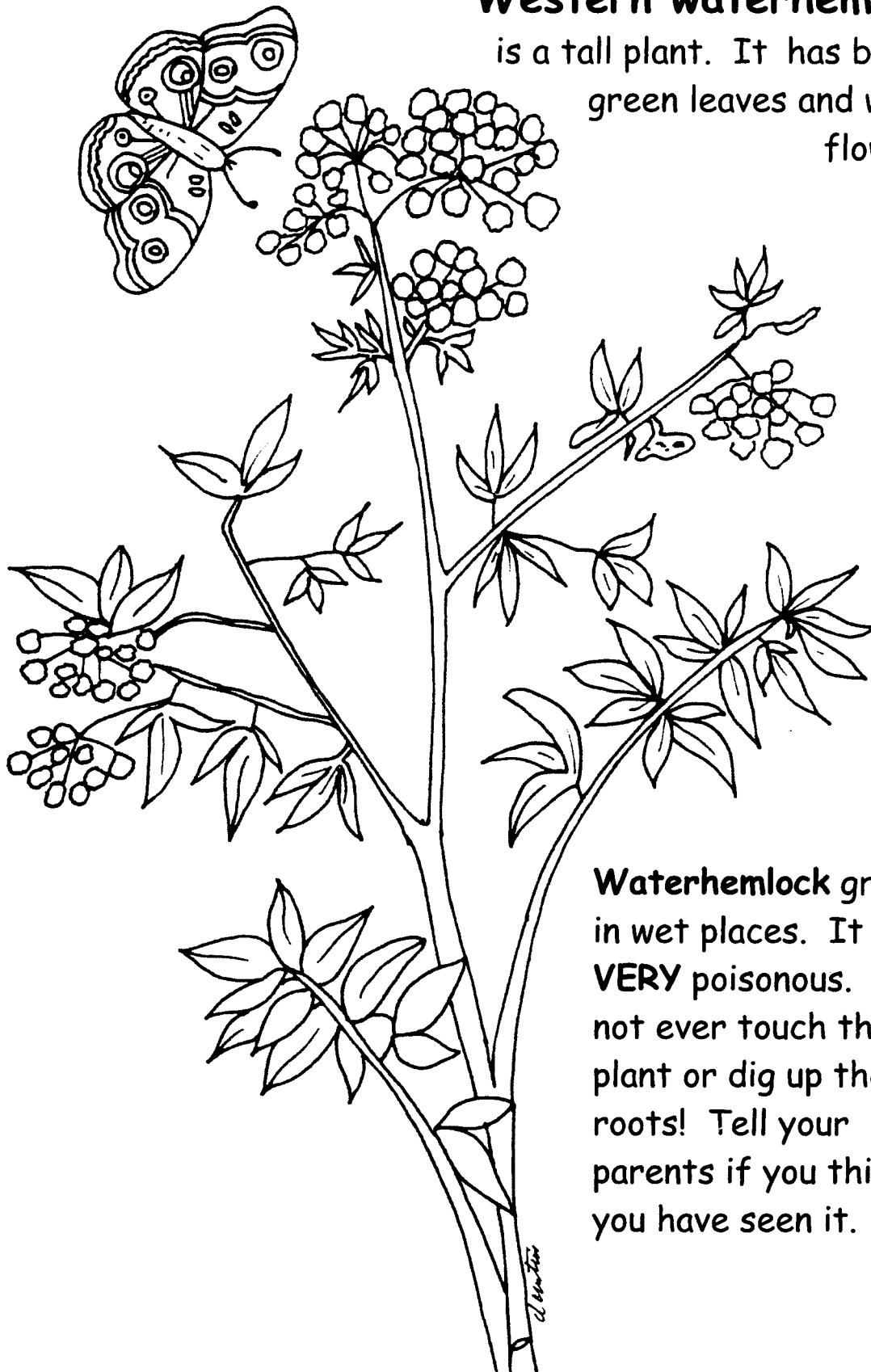


**Eurasian watermilfoil** grows in the water. It crowds out good plants and makes it hard for fish to live.



## Western waterhemlock

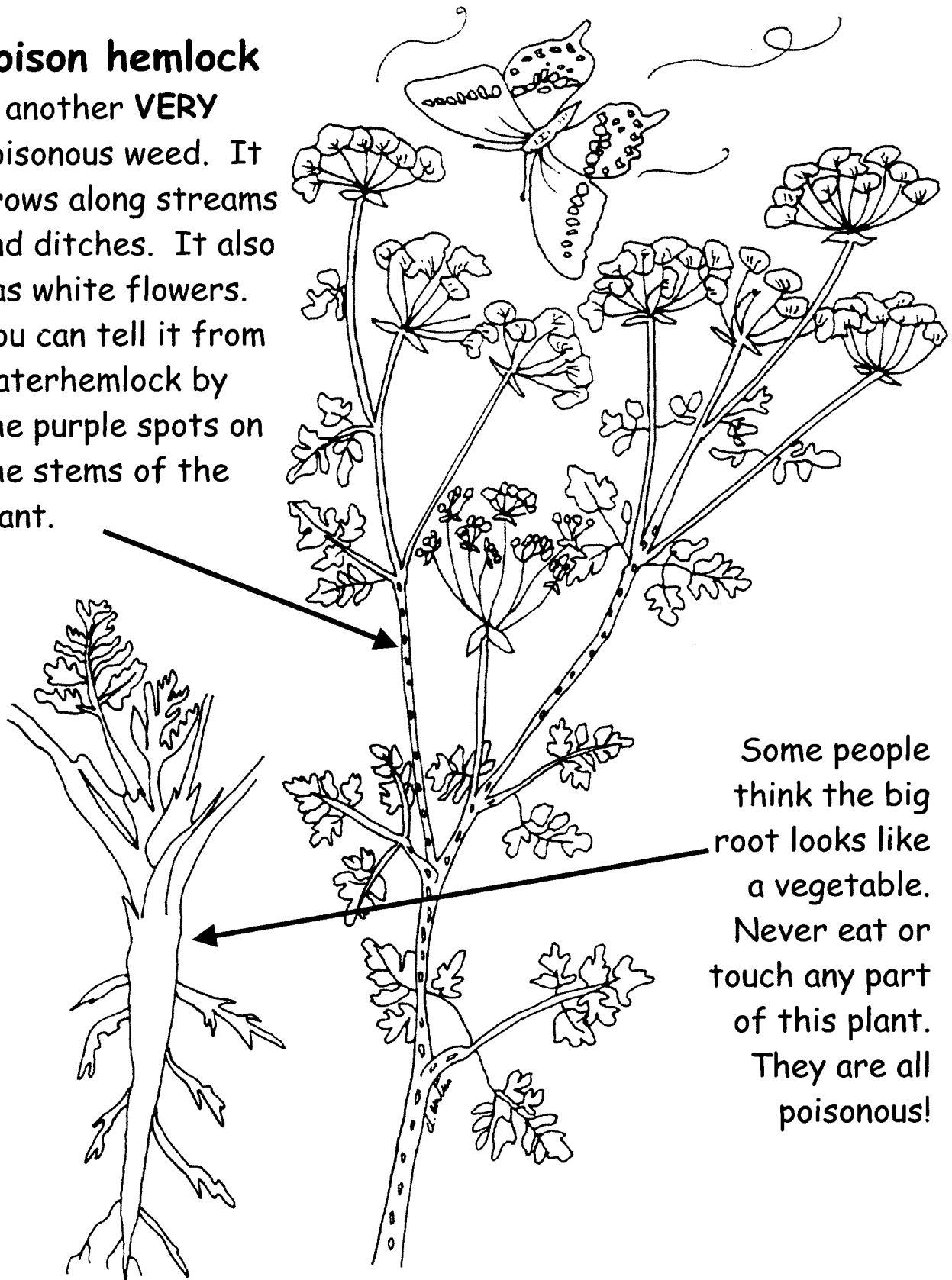
is a tall plant. It has bright green leaves and white flowers.



**Waterhemlock** grows in wet places. It is **VERY** poisonous. Do not ever touch this plant or dig up the roots! Tell your parents if you think you have seen it.

## Poison hemlock

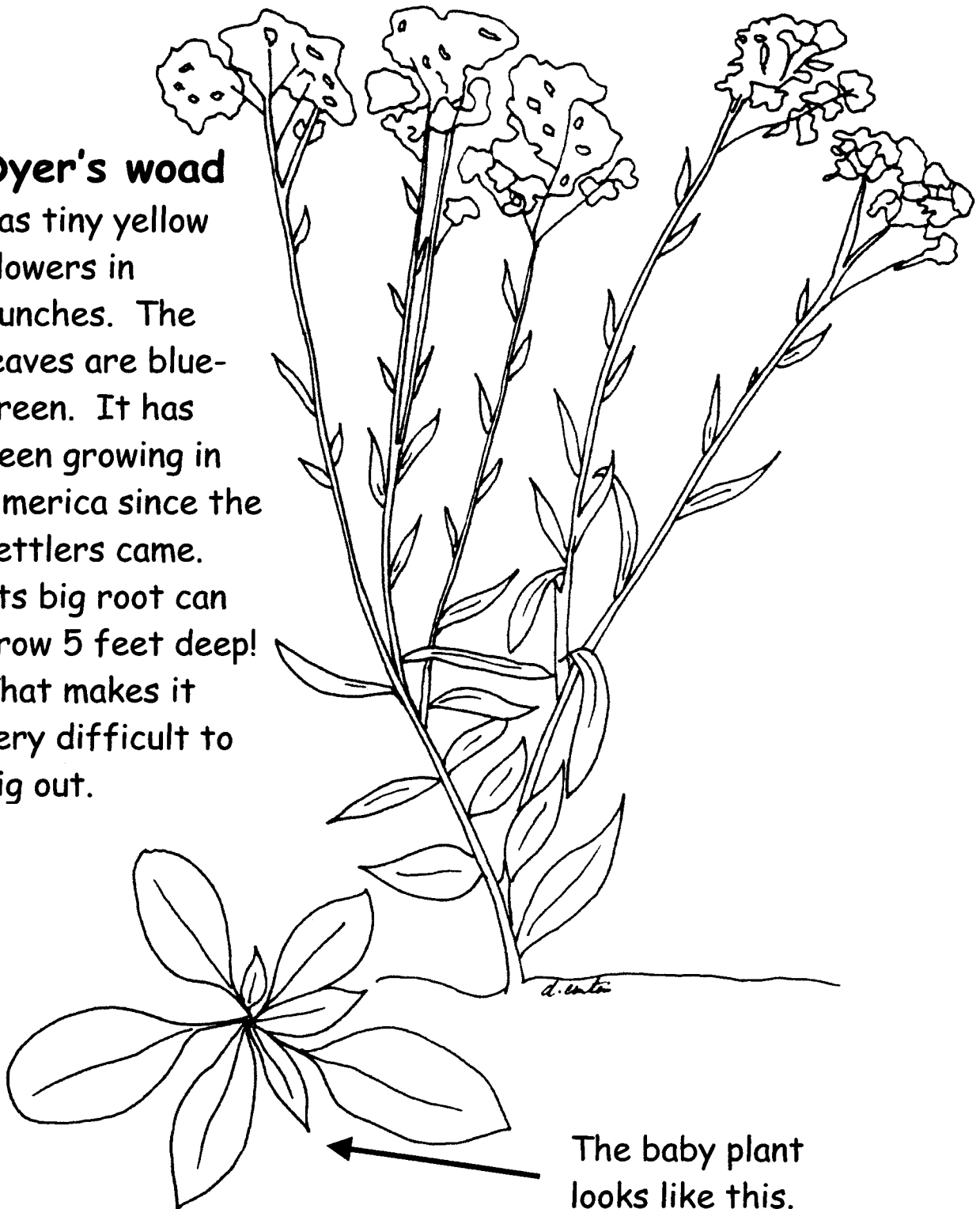
is another **VERY** poisonous weed. It grows along streams and ditches. It also has white flowers. You can tell it from waterhemlock by the purple spots on the stems of the plant.



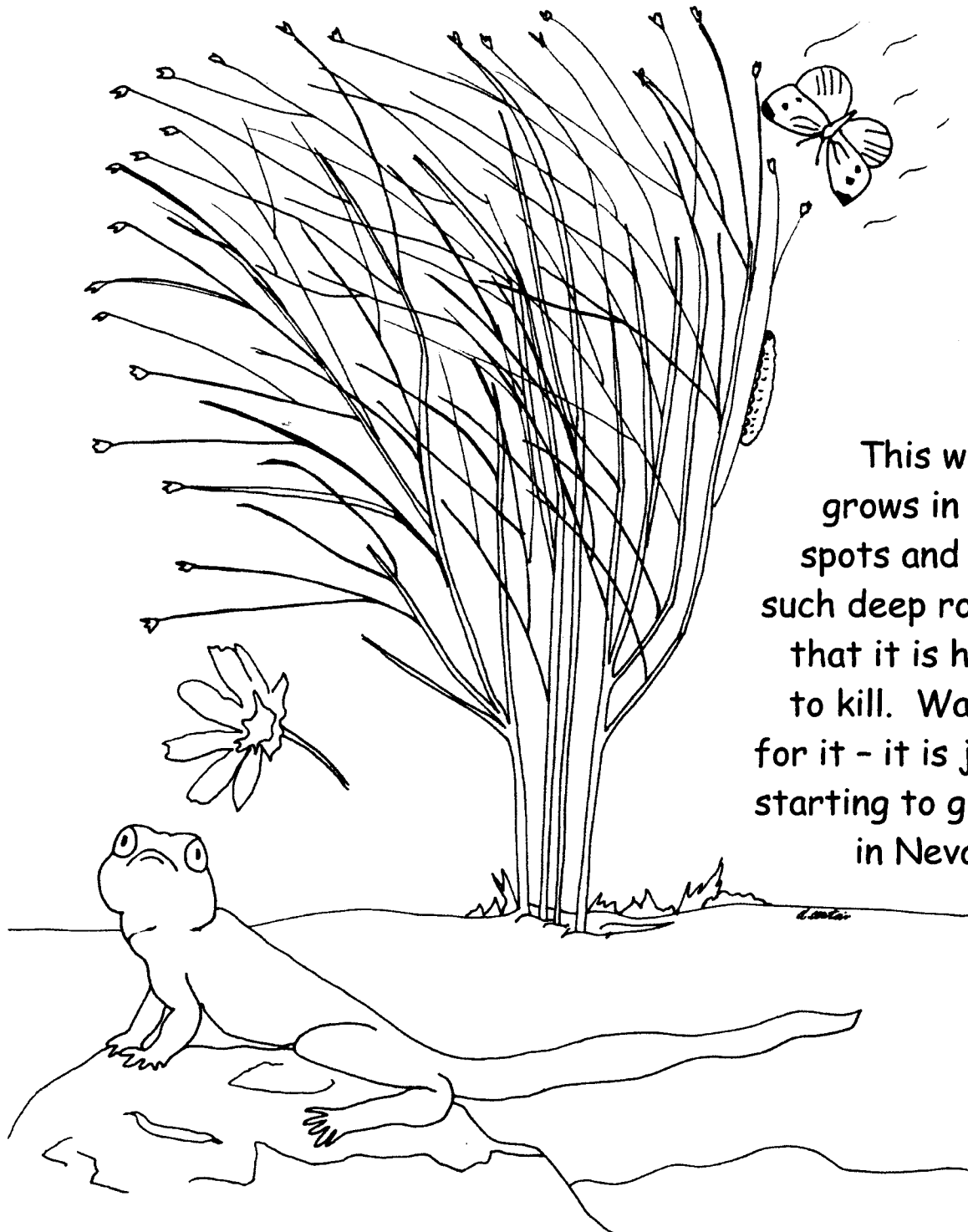
Some people think the big root looks like a vegetable. Never eat or touch any part of this plant. They are all poisonous!

## **Dyer's woad**

has tiny yellow flowers in bunches. The leaves are blue-green. It has been growing in America since the settlers came. Its big root can grow 5 feet deep! That makes it very difficult to dig out.

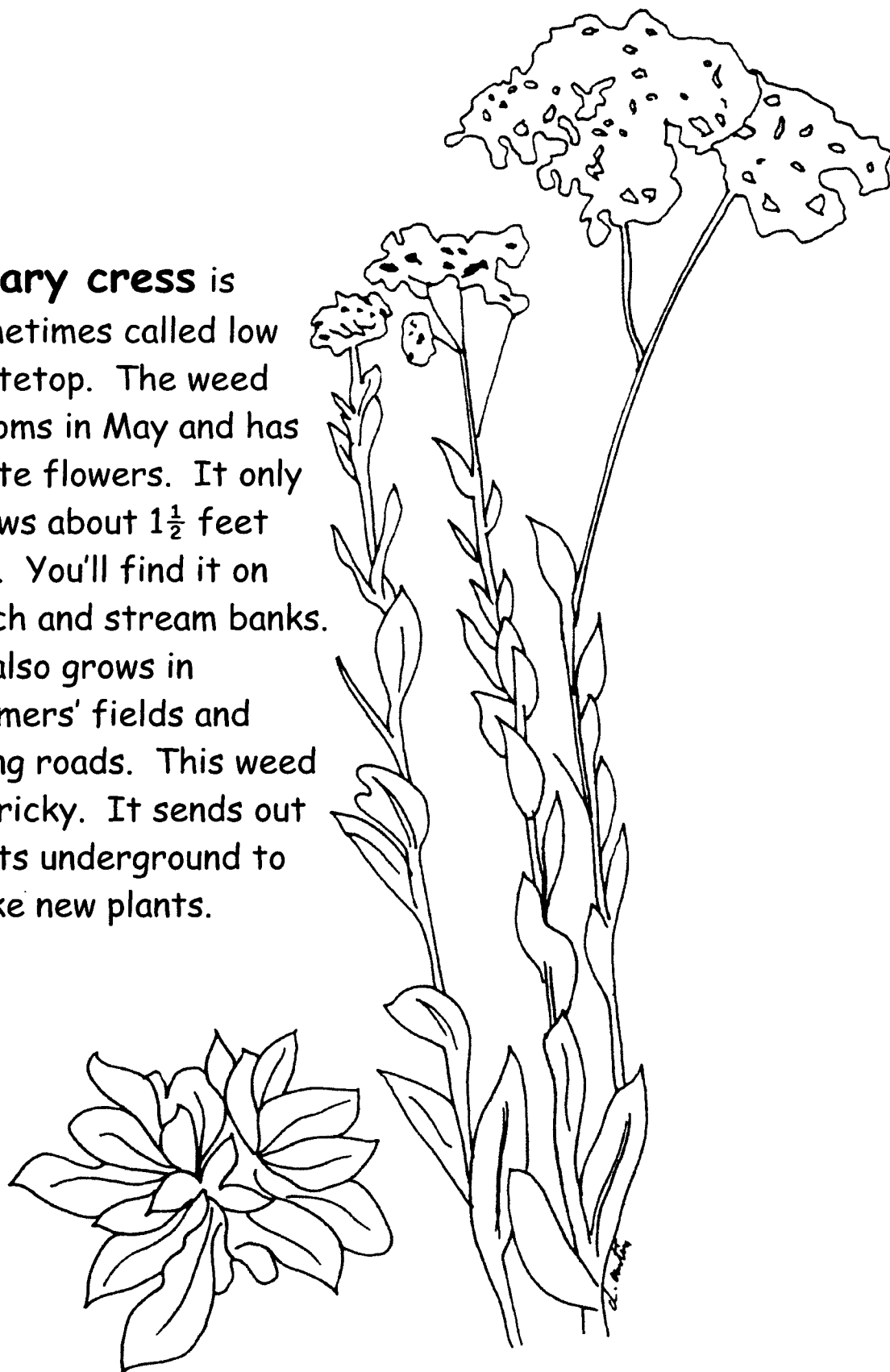


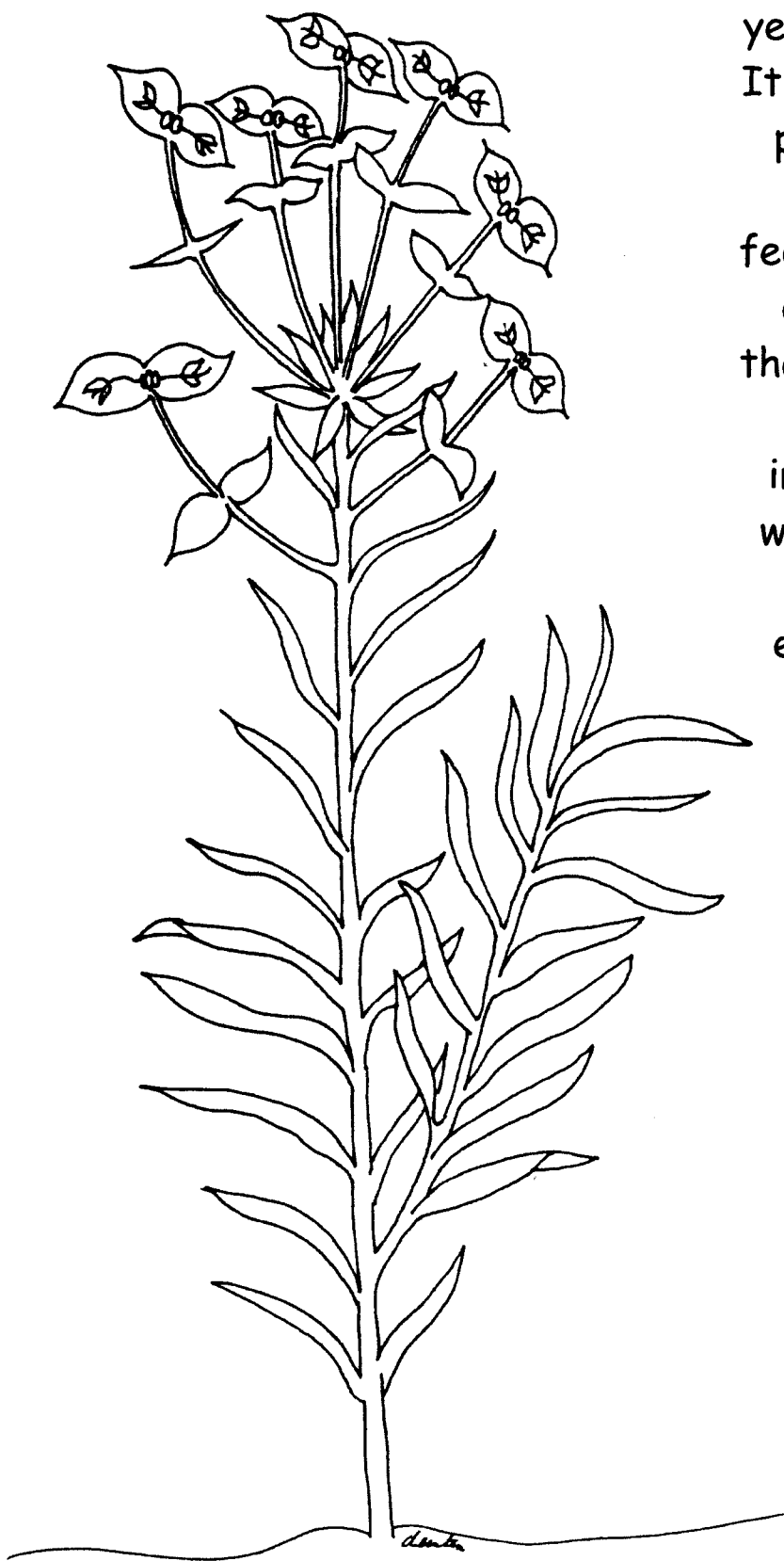
**Rush skeletonweed** looks like a skeleton of a plant, but it's not. It can grow as tall as 4 feet, and has such tiny leaves that they are difficult to see. The flower is yellow.



This weed grows in dry spots and has such deep roots that it is hard to kill. Watch for it - it is just starting to grow in Nevada.

**Hoary cress** is sometimes called low whitetop. The weed blooms in May and has white flowers. It only grows about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  feet tall. You'll find it on ditch and stream banks. It also grows in farmers' fields and along roads. This weed is tricky. It sends out roots underground to make new plants.





**Leafy spurge** has yellow-green flowers. It has become a huge problem! The roots grow 12 feet to 25 feet deep. It crowds out the good plants that animals need for food. Its sap can irritate your skin as well as your animal's. It is growing in eastern Nevada but could spread fast.

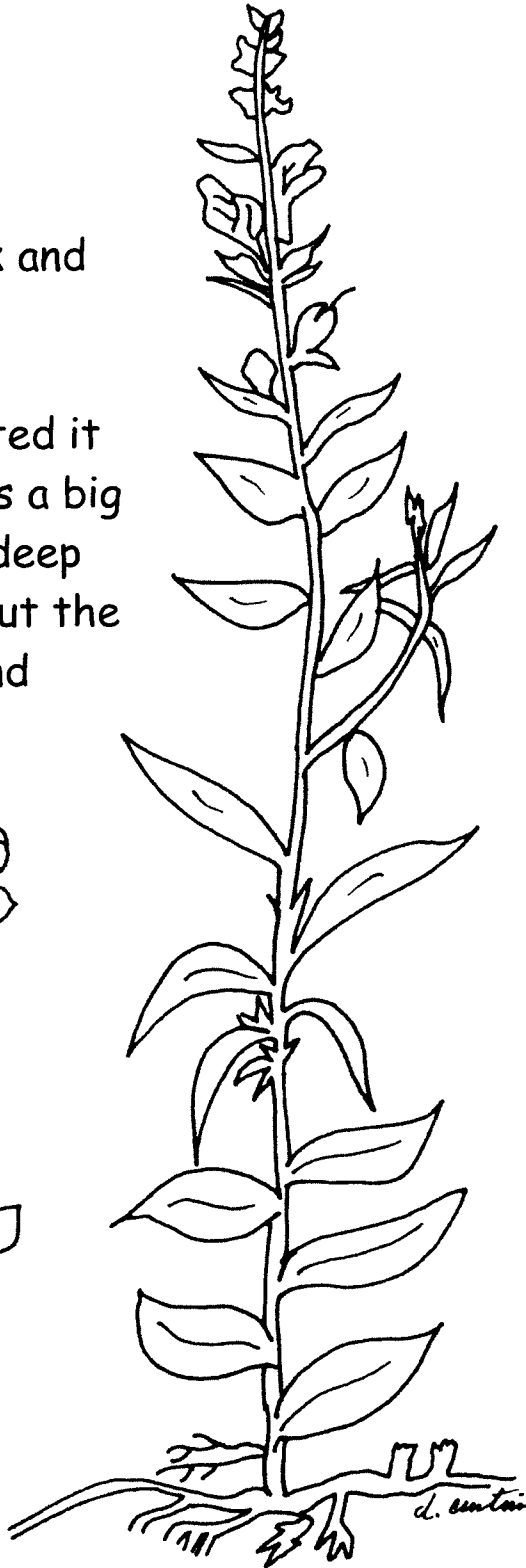
## Dalmatian toadflax

doesn't look like the black and white dog! It has yellow flowers that look like snapdragons. People planted it in their gardens. This was a big mistake. Toadflax has a deep root system. It crowds out the good plants in pastures and along roads.

This is  
the  
flower.



This is  
the baby  
plant.



**Tall whitetop** is a big problem in Nevada. It is growing like crazy along all our rivers. It grows so fast and so thick that the other plants die. It can grow up to 7 feet tall! It flowers in June and has lots of tiny white blooms.





**Look through your activity book. How many  
can you find?**

Butterflies \_\_\_\_\_

Frogs \_\_\_\_\_

Lizards \_\_\_\_\_

Caterpillars \_\_\_\_\_

Fish \_\_\_\_\_

Ants \_\_\_\_\_

Scorpions \_\_\_\_\_

Do you think these animals would rather live near noxious  
weeds or native plants?

Which weeds are growing near water?

Which weeds might grow in a dry place?

How many weeds can you count that have purple flowers? Can  
you name them?

How many weeds can you count that have white flowers? Can  
you name them?

How many weeds can you count that have yellow flowers? Can  
you name them?

# Fill in the Blanks to Spell "Noxious Weeds"

D \_ \_ M \_ T \_ \_ N \_ \_ A D \_ L \_ \_

P O \_ \_ O \_ H \_ M \_ \_ C \_

X

\_ \_ L L \_ \_ I \_ E \_ \_ P

\_ O \_ R Y \_ \_ E \_ S

M U \_ K \_ \_ I S \_ L \_

\_ Y E \_ S \_ O \_ D

K \_ \_ P W \_ E \_ \_

\_ E A \_ \_ S \_ \_ \_ G \_

P \_ \_ P \_ E \_ O O \_ \_ S \_ \_ I \_ E

\_ \_ D \_ S A \_ \_ A \_

\_ U \_ H S \_ E \_ E T \_ N W \_ E \_

## What Do I Do If I Find a Noxious Weed

Now that you know what some noxious weeds look like, you may find them in your neighborhood - or even in your own yard. Oh no! What do you do now?

The most important thing to do is to tell your parents or another adult right away. They can help you pull up a weed. Try to get as much of the plant as you can. Put it in a paper bag and take it to your local Cooperative Extension office. There is a list of offices on the last page of your activity book.

Don't let the weed sit in the hot sun or the car, or it will turn into a crispy critter! Bring in a nice, fresh plant.

At the Cooperative Extension office, workers will tell you the name of the weed. They will also tell you what to do about it.

You and your parents can help by getting rid of problem weeds right away. Your 4-H club, Girl or Boy Scout Troop, or other club can help by volunteering to pull noxious weeds. Join the war on weeds and become a Weedbuster!

## **What Can My Family Do to Stop the Spread of Weeds?**

It takes everyone to beat noxious weeds. There are many ways you and your family can help stop their spread. Read this page with your parents so they can become Weedbusters!

1. Drive only on established roads and trails away from weed-infested areas.
2. Never camp or drive in weed infested areas.
3. When riding horses in the back country, carry only feed that is certified weed free, and feed them only certified food for 96 hours before entering back country.
4. Remove weed seeds from horses or pack animals by rushing them well and cleaning their hooves before entering weed-free areas.
5. Don't pick the flowers of noxious weeds and take them home.
6. Don't pick and transport wild flowers that you can't identify.
7. If you find a weed infested area, let the landowner or land managing agency know so that they can take steps to control the weeds.

This is to certify that

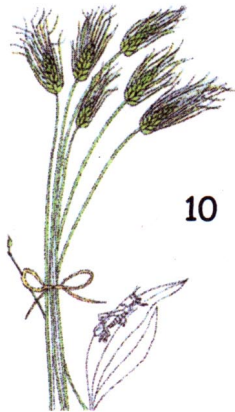
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is an official

**WEDDUSTER**

University of Nevada Cooperative Extension

## Color Pictures of Weeds in This Book



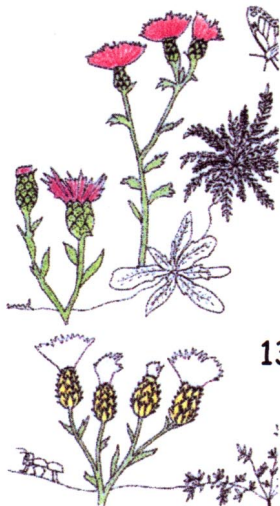
10



11



12



13

Page 10: Medusahead  
 Page 11: Yellow starthistle  
 Page 12: Musk thistle  
 Page 13: Knapweeds  
 Page 14: Puncturevine  
 Page 15: Purple loosestrife  
 Page 15: Eurasian watermilfoil  
 Page 16: Western waterhemlock  
 Page 17: Poison hemlock



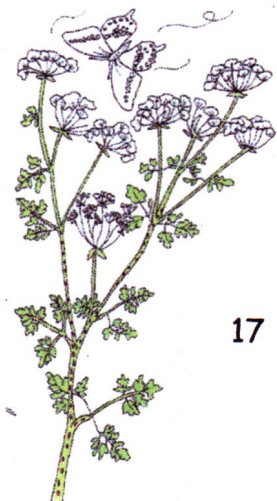
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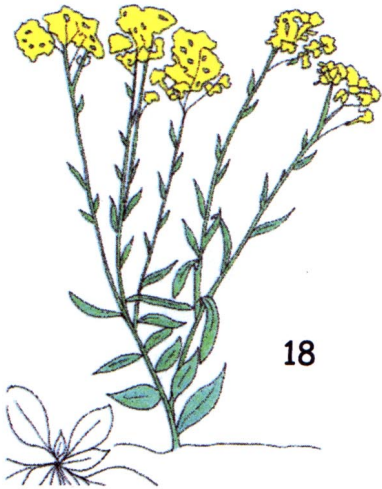


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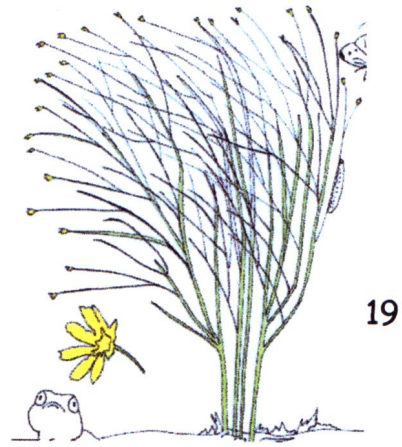


17

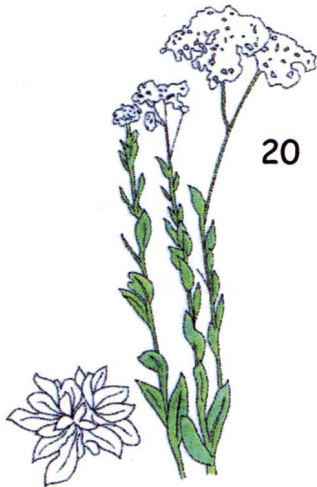
## Color Pictures of Weeds in This Book



18



19



20

Page 18: Dyers woad

Page 19: Rush skeletonweed

Page 20: Hoary cress

Page 21: Leafy spurge

Page 22: Dalmatian toadflax

Page 23: Tall whitetop



21



22



23

# Nevada Noxious Weeds List

(as of August, 2000)

According to Nevada law, the person who owns or uses a property must try to control the following weeds on that property:

African Rue (*Peganum harmala*)

Austrian fieldcress (*Rorippa austriaca*)

Austrian peaweed (*Sphaerophysa salsula*)

Black henbane (*Hyoscyamus niger*)

Camelthorn (*Alhagi camelorum*)

Common crupina (*Crupina vulgaris*)

Dyer's woad (*Isatis tinctoria*)

Eurasian water-milfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*)

Goats rue (*Galega officinalis*)

Klamath weed (*Hypericum perforatum*)

Hemlock:

Poison (*Conium maculatum*)

Water (*Cicuta maculata*)

Horsenettle:

Carolina (*Solanum carolinense*)

White (*Solanum elaeagnifolium*)

Houndstongue (*Cynoglossum officinale*)

Hydrilla (*Hydrilla verticillata*)

Knapweed:

Diffuse (*Centaurea diffusa*)

Russian (*Centaurea repens*)

Spotted (*Centaurea maculosa*)

Squarrose (*Centaurea squarrosa*)



Leafy spurge (*Euphorbia esula*)  
Mayweed chamomile (*Anthemis cotula*)  
Mediterranean sage (*Salvia aethiopis*)  
Medusahead (*Taeniatherum caput-medusae*)  
Perennial pepperweed (a.k.a. tall whitetop) (*Lepidium latifolium*)  
Puncturevine (*Tribulus terrestris*)  
Purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*)  
Rush skeletonweed (*Chondrilla juncea*)  
Saltcedar (tamarisk) (*Tamarix ramosissima*)  
Sorghum species, perennial, including but not limited to:  
    Johnson grass  
    Sorghum alum  
    Perennial sweet sudan  
Sulfur cinquefoil (*Potentilla recta*)  
Thistle:  
    Canada (*Cirsium arvense*)  
    Musk (*Carduus nutans*)  
    Scotch (*Onopordum acanthium*)  
    Sow (*Sonchus arvensis*)  
    Iberian star (*Centaurea iberica*)  
    Purple star (*Centaurea calcitrapa*)  
    Yellow star (*Centaurea solstitialis*)  
Toadflax:  
    Dalmatian (*Linaria dalmatica*)  
    Yellow (*Linaria vulgaris*)  
Whitetop (hoary cress) (*Cardaria draba*)

# Answer Key

## How many can you find? (p. 25)

Butterflies: 4  
Lizards: 1  
Fish: 2  
Scorpions: 1  
Frogs: 1  
Caterpillars: 1  
Ants: 1

## Word Search (p. 26)

dalmatian toadflax  
poison hemlock  
X  
tall whitetop  
hoary cress  
musk thistle  
Dyers woad  
  
Knapweeds  
leafy spurge  
purple loosestrife  
medusahead  
rush skeletonweed

Do you think these animals would rather live near noxious weeds or native plants?  
Near native plants - they need native plants for food, shelter, and good habitat.

Which weeds are growing near water? Tall whitetop and purple loosestrife

Which weeds might grow in a dry place? Rush skeletonweed, puncturevine, yellow starthistle

How many weeds can you count that have purple flowers? (5) Can you name them?  
Musk thistle, all 3 knapweeds, purple loosestrife

How many weeds can you count that have white flowers? (4) Can you name them?  
Waterhemlock, poison hemlock, hoary cress, tall whitetop

How many weeds can you count that have yellow flowers? (6) Can you name them?  
Yellow starthistle, puncturevine, Dyers woad, rush skeletonweed, leafy spurge, dalmatian toadflax

# INVADERS



Help us keep Nevada  
Healthy and Beautiful  
From Invasive Species

**Invasive Species** are noxious weeds, insects, mammals and plant diseases, non-native to Nevada, that raise havoc with the environment, economy and public health.

**If you see an invader**

contact us at:

**[www.invaders.nv.blm.gov](http://www.invaders.nv.blm.gov)**

or call:

(775) 688-1180, x269

NEVADA INVASIVE SPECIES INITIATIVE

# University of Nevada Cooperative Extension Office Locations

**Battle Mountain**  
815 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> St., 89820  
(775) 635-5565, FAX (775) 635-8309

**Caliente**  
360 Lincoln St., P.O. Box 68, 89008  
(775) 726-3109, FAX (775) 726-3332

**Carson City/Storey County**  
2621 Northgate Ln., Ste. 15, 89706  
(775) 887-2252, FAX (775) 887-2065

**Elko**  
1500 College Parkway, 89801  
(775) 738-7291, FAX (775) 753-7843

**Ely**  
995 Campton St., 89301  
(775) 289-4459, FAX (775) 289-1462

**Eureka**  
701 S. Main St., P.O. Box 613, 89316  
(775) 237-5326, FAX (775) 237-5164

**Fallon**  
111 Sheckler Rd., 89406  
(775) 423-5121, FAX (775) 423-7594

**Incline Village**  
865 Tahoe Blvd., Ste. 110  
P.O. Box 8208, 89452  
(775) 832-4150, FAX (775) 832-4139

**Las Vegas**  
2345 Red Rock St., Ste. 100, 89146  
(702) 222-3130, FAX (702) 222-3100

**Logandale**  
1897 N. Moapa Valley Blvd.,  
P.O. Box 126, 89021  
(702) 397-2604, FAX (702) 397-8301

**Lovelock**  
810 6<sup>th</sup> St., P.O. Box 239, 89419  
(775) 273-2923, FAX (775) 273-7647

**Minden/Gardnerville**  
1329 Waterloo Lane, P.O. Box 338, 89423  
(775) 782-9960, FAX (775) 782-9968

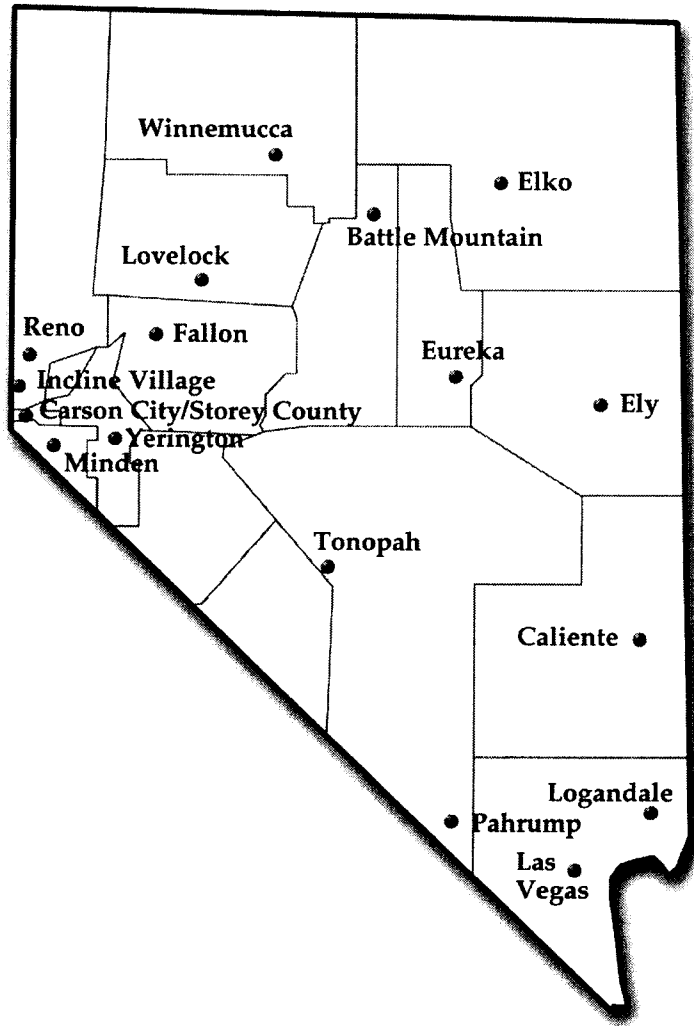
**Pahrump**  
1651 E. Calvada Blvd., P.O. Box 1020, 89041  
(775) 727-5532, FAX (775) 727-6199

**Reno**  
5305 Mill St., P.O. Box 11130, 89520  
(775) 784-4848, FAX (775) 784-4881

**Tonopah**  
1 Frankee St., P.O. Box 231, 89049  
(775) 482-6794, FAX (775) 482-5396

**Winnemucca**  
1085 Fairgrounds Rd., 89445  
(775) 623-6304, FAX (775) 623-6307

**Yerington**  
504 S. Main St., P.O. Box 811, 89447  
(775) 463-6541, FAX (775) 463-6545



## Administration:

Karen Hinton  
Dean & Director  
hinton@scs.unr.edu

**Central/Northeast Area**  
Jerry Buk, Area Director  
2055 Schurz Highway, Fallon 89406  
(775) 423-2844  
FAX (775) 423-1901

**Campus Office**  
National Judicial College, Suite 118  
UNR/404, Reno 89557  
(775) 784-7070  
FAX (775) 784-7079

**Southern Area**  
Dixie Allsbrook, Area Director  
2345 Red Rock St., Ste. 100, Las Vegas 89146  
(702) 222-3130  
FAX (702) 222-3101

**Las Vegas Office**  
2345 Red Rock St., Ste. 330  
Las Vegas 89146  
(702) 251-7531  
FAX (702) 251-7536

**Western Area**  
Richard Post, Area Director  
5305 Mill St., P.O. Box 11130, Reno 89520  
(775) 784-4848  
FAX (775) 784-4881

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